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ABSTRACT

Results of an ethnographic study indicate that one elementary school teacher's management plan reflects interaction between teaching goals, strategies which are hierarchically arranged, and the selection criteria she considers relevant. Selection criteria include teacher beliefs about the student's personality, the student's level of required supervision, the relative intentiality and disruptiveness of the student's behavior, if the student's behavior is isolated or repeated, and if the student's behavior is improving. Once all the possibilities for action are considered, a repertoire of management strategies is produced reflecting the teacher's goals and beliefs. A technique for testing the data indicates an accuracy rate of 92 percent for predicting the teacher's selections of management strategies during another school year. Results suggest that, if a teacher has a plan in mind, it is possible to select management strategies during interactive teaching with student outcomes in mind. (Author/JD)

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A Cognitive Ethnography and Quantification of A First Grade Teacher's Selections of Strategies to Manage Students

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Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Southwest Educational Research Association, Houston, Texas, January 27-29, 1983

ABSTRACT

Pittman, Sherry I. A cognitive ethnography and quantification of a first-grade teacher's selections of strategies to manage students

As a result of an ethnographic study of how a first-grade teacher selects management strategies, it is found that one teacher's management plan reflects interaction between her goals, strategies which are hierarchically arranged, and the selection criteria she considers relevant. Selection criteria include teacher beliefs about the student's personality, the student's level of required supervision, the relative intentionality and disruptiveness of the student's behavior, if the student's behavior is isolated or repeated, and if the student's behavior is improving. Once all the possibilities for action are considered, a repertoire of management strategies is produced reflecting the teacher's goals and beliefs. A technique for testing the data indicates an accuracy rate of 92% for predicting the teacher's selections of management strategies during another school year. The results suggest that if a teacher has a plan in mind, it is possible to purposefully select management strategies during interactive teaching with student outcomes in mind.

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT; TEACHER BELIEFS; TEACHER DECISION MAKING: TEACHER PLANNING: COGNITIVE ANTHROPOLOGY; COGNITIVE PROCESSES

Statement of the problem

Because studies of classroom management have typically focused on teacher behavior, the relationship between teacher knowledge and behavior has not been well researched (Emmer & Evertson, 1981). The problem is being addressed now that researchers are including classroom teachers in the research process and are attempting to formulate cognitively valid statements about classroom interaction (NIE, 1975).

The few studies that are available in the area of teacher decision making and classroom management have identified the need for explaining the management plan of teachers (Brophy & Rohrkemper, 1981; Cone, 1978; MacKay & Marlin, 1978). There is a need for identifying the cognitive relationship between the goals and beliefs of teachers, the criteria they consider significant to the situation, and the management strategies they select for the student. The research findings, however, are lacking in precision, primarily because most of the studies have been laboratory-based. The possibility exists that the response of the teacher to a hypothetical situation may be different from the response made in the complex context of the teacher's own classroom.

To discover how and why one first-grade teacher selects management strategies for her students, a study was conducted during the spring and fall of 1982. The study had two purposes. First, to discover the cognitive relationship

between a teacher's criteria and the selection of strategies, e.g. the teacher's management plan. Secondly, to determine if the management plan could be used to predict the teacher's selections of management strategies.

Based on explanations of the teacher, who became known as "Mrs. Fisher," it was hypothesized that differences in her management plan in the spring and fall would be one of emphasis on training the students. Mrs. Fisher reported that in the fall she is more likely to select training strategies, which are similar to Kounin's mild desists (1970), than in the spring, when the students know more.

Mrs. Fisher is acknowledged by the principal and her peers to be an effective teacher and manager. She has taught all the elementary grades during twenty years of classroom experience. The investigator found that Mrs. Fisher approached her teaching responsibilities with energy and enthusiasm.

The school is located in a blue collar neighborhood of a large urban school district. The school population, which is 52% white, 27.5 Hispanic, 18.5% Black, and 2.1% Asian (990 students), is representative of the community. 41% of the student population participates in the USDA lunch program and 70.9% of the students are performing at or above grade level.

Theoretical framework

Cognitive psychologists theorize that people employ

abstract mental structures called schemes to generalize an action to other contexts which are similar (Piaget, 1926). Plans are a kind of scheme which are used to determine which alternative strategy should be selected, depending on the criteria (Shank & Abelson, 1977).[1] For example, a driver approaching an intersection must determine whether the light is red or green. If the light is green and has just turned green, she "proceeds cautiously." If the light is green and has been green for a "long time," the driver "breezes through." If the light is red, she stops. If the light is yellow, the driver considers other alternatives, contingent upon the criteria. Once the criteria for selecting a particular course of action are known, an observer can generate several hypotheses about what a driver will do as she approaches the intersection. The observer can test the hypotheses by standing on the corner and counting the number of times a driver "proceeds with caution" when the light has just turned green, and "breezes through" when the light has been green for a "long time." If there are ambiguities, the observer can always interview the driver after the fact to determine if she actually did "proceed with caution."

Cognitive anthropologists have developed a method of research, called cognitive ethnography, which has been used to identify and quantify plans (Geoghegan, 1969; Gladwin, 1976; Randall, 1977; Young, 1980). The method primarily

involves going back and forth between directly observing and systematically asking questions of the informants. Hypotheses about which criteria are relevant to solving a problem are generated and tested using the same procedure. Finally, descriptive statements or strategies which represent the plan are formulated and quantified in much the same way as the observer at the intersection did. If a high rate of accuracy in predicting the plan is obtained, the investigator is fairly certain that criteria relevant to selecting strategies have been identified. Thus the link between knowledge and purposive action is demonstrated.

Focus of the study

Using the methodology of cognitive ethnography, data was collected over a five month period in the spring of 1982. A total of twenty-three hours of interviewing and thirty hours of observation was conducted. During the fall of 1982, this data was used to test the predictability of the teacher's selections of management strategies with a newly assigned group of first graders.

To integrate her classroom management system into the flow of classroom activities, a teacher is required to select numerous strategies throughout the school day. Therefore, to establish realistic boundaries for the collection of data, the focus of the study eventually became that of reading

instruction time and the interaction of the teacher with the students engaged in seatwork. To establish this focus, the investigator went from general participant observation to topic centered observation as described by Spradley (1979;1980).

Reading was chosen because of the extensive amount of time Mrs. Fisher invested in reading instruction, and because the students spend two-thirds of that time engaged in seatwork activities. To date, there is little available data about the beliefs and criteria a primary teacher considers as she interacts with students involved in seatwork while she is simultaneously instructing a small group in reading.

A macro-plan for selecting management strategies

Macro-plans are plans that are broadly applicable and similar across tasks. Because of their generality, they are potentially obvious. Their importance becomes apparent when it is realized that the macro-plan is a patterned solution to a variety to tasks that re-occur frequently. Mrs. Fisher uses a macro-plan for classroom management which guides her efforts to find just the right formula for responding to a problem that involves the whole class or one or two students.

The structure of the Fisher macro-plan is sequential. Once it is determined that the group or an individual is off task, a strategy is selected and the means is made avail-

able, which my be chalk for writing a name on the board or a three-minute sand timer for taking a time-out. The strategy is then implemented. If it works, Mrs. Fisher goes back to monitoring those engaged in seatwork; if not, she tries another strategy. For example, if it is a group problem and a number of students are off task at their desks, she selects a "group alert." The "group alert" is a signal that Mrs. Fisher uses to alert the group or student(s) that they need to become aware of what they are doing or not doing and take steps to correct it themselves. Several variations may be applied, usually at the beginning of the seatwork activity. "Those aren't work sounds I'm hearing." I still hear talking."

Once the group is settled, which seldom takes long, Mrs. Fisher then focuses on any individual who is off task. She may turn her head in his direction to catch his eye. If she catches his eye and he settles down, she goes back to monitoring. If not, she may try another strategy, especially if the student has not yet learned to be aware of the teacher's "eye."

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Insert Figure 1 about here

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Instructional and management goals

In order to understand the structure of the management plan of Mrs. Fisher, it is necessary to know her goals in the area of reading. Her goal in reading is simple and straightforward. She aims to develop a willing and independent reader. As she has stated, "I want them to love to read and not be afraid

to read anything." To accomplish this goal, she has a complex collection of interrelated materials for seatwork which the students must work on in a certain order. Mrs. Fisher closely monitors this process and provides feedback regularly.[2]

To make certain that the students make use of the materials, her announced management goal is to cause the students to participate as fully as possible. To accomplish this, Mrs. Fisher has formulated several sub-goals which are hierarchically arranged. 1) Motivate the student. Cause the student to want to be part of the group. "They need to feel they belong." Mrs. Fisher is especially concerned about this step early in the year. 2) Cause the student to understand and habitually practice self-control skills. "That's my biggest goal in doing most of this." "Help children help themselves to develop the ability to monitor themselves to make decisions that are appropriate. "I want them to correct themselves. If that doesn't work, then I step in. If I can't do it alone, then I involve the parents. If that doesn't work, then we go to the principal." 3) Cause the student to understand and habitually practice work-study skills. "They need to learn to concentrate." "Tell them they are never done."

Criteria for making management strategy selections

Though a macro-plan tends to be potentially obvious, how a teacher makes use of a plan is by no means obvious. Criteria,

one element of a plan, must be considered. There are several criteria which may influence the selection of a management strategy by Mrs. Fisher. For discussion purposes, the investigator has labeled them personality characteristics, types of off-task behavior, level of required supervision, repeated vs. isolated behavior, and improving vs. not improving.

Personality characteristics. Mrs. Fisher makes use of personality characteristics of her students in order to set management objectives. For her, first graders often have either a "boisterous" personality or a "shy" personality. They may be too boisterous or too shy to the extent that it affects their level of participation in classroom activities. The objective is to get them "on target," e.g. able to monitor their own behavior and "make decisions that are appropriate." Shy students may need encouragement in expressing themselves, so Mrs. Fisher may refrain from correcting them unless they are really disturbing the class. On the other hand, boisterous students often need guidance in learning how to listen and being aware of others' needs. Their behavior tends to escalate and become disruptive, so Mrs. Fisher is more likely to correct a boisterous student if he starts to get too loud.

This criterion can also affect Mrs. Fisher's assignment of students to various reading groups and the creation of a fourth small reading group. In the fall of 1982, Mrs. Fisher divided the middle group into groups, with the shy students in one and the boisterous, aggressive students in another. She

explained that the shy students had been getting shyer and were not participating in the reading lesson because the other students tended to be more outgoing and had more to say.

Types of off-task behavior. Mrs. Fisher ranks behaviors according to the degree to which they disrupt the class and the intentions of the student to be disruptive. Both factors appear to be interrelated. To the extent that a behavior disrupts, it is often considered intentional. However, sneaky behavior, though not disruptive all the time, is considered intentional by Mrs. Fisher because it is by its nature a repeated act.

If a student is having difficulty in learning a new behavior, such as how to get the teacher's attention without blurting out, it is a "learning problem," and Mrs. Fisher may not consider it to be intentional. If the student is having trouble completing work, unable to concentrate, unable to put thoughts on paper, or unable to move to another task after completion of the first, it is a "work-study problem." If the action of a student is performed with the intention of disrupting, it is a "discipline problem." The term "off-task behavior" is used to refer to any one of these three management problems.

During an experiment, Mrs. Fisher was asked to sort a group of observed off-task behaviors according to seriousness, group

them and then label the groups. She quickly produced four groups, "not tolerated ever," including stealing major items, fighting, and the destruction of property; "very serious," including arguing with the teacher, blurting out, and tattling; "serious" to "minor," including sneakiness, wandering around the room haphazardly, and daydreaming.

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Insert Figure 2 about here
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Level of required supervision. Mrs. Fisher has fine-tuned a number of developmental characteristics which help her to determine the level of supervision a student may need. This enables her to generate subgoals that are appropriate for that student. Though we have termed these characteristics 'required levels of supervision,' Mrs. Fisher calls them "levels of development."

According to Mrs. Fisher, a first-grader's level of required supervision may range from requiring almost constant supervision to requiring only a small amount, and appears to be related to membership in the reading groups. Students who are in Group I, the top reading group, are able to monitor their own behavior to a great extent and are "on target kids." Students who need more teacher interaction to learn to read and require more supervision in order to practice self-control skills and work-study skills are usually found in the lowest reading group and sometimes in the middle group.

For easy reference, the investigator has abbreviated Mrs. Fisher's range of developmental characteristics into three distinct levels, above average, average, and below average. The above average student understands and habitually practices self-control skills in most settings. Some monitoring is required. "Tell them once or twice and they understand." The average student understands and practices some self-control skills in some settings but not in others. Monitoring is required. "...Learns (the rules) after three or four explanations." The below average student is beginning to understand and practice pre-primary interpersonal values, such as how to "please the teacher." Behavior must be monitored closely during seatwork. "It's going to take 10 to 100 repetitions before they learn it."

The actions of above average students are always considered more intentional than similar actions performed by other students. They have a better understanding and put more thought into what they do, according to Mrs. Fisher.

Repeated vs. isolated behavior. Behaviors when repeated are considered by Mrs. Fisher to be more serious than similar behaviors that occur infrequently. She defines a repeated behavior as any behavior that is repeated within a twenty-four hour period, "from breaktime to breaktime." A high degree of intentionality is attributed to such behaviors particularly if performed by an above average student. More warnings (training)

are given to a below average student; but if the behavior persists, then the actions may be considered intentional, and labeled a "bad habit" by Mrs. Fisher. At any rate, Mrs. Fisher's rule of thumb for the number of warnings given to any one student during the course of one day is about three. "Three's the charm."

Improving vs. not improving. If the student has been steadily improving and slips momentarily, Mrs. Fisher may omit taking action or select a milder management strategy. "I don't want to send the wrong message." If the student has not been improving, the behavior is considered more serious because it is repeated, as explained above.

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Insert Figure 3 about here

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Management strategies

Mrs. Fisher has an extensive repertoire of management strategies she selects depending on the problems and the objectives she has for that student. They include "training strategies," "correcting strategies," and "off the board strategies."

Training strategies. The training strategies are used to give warnings to individuals or to the group as a whole and to respond to behaviors that are considered "very serious"

to "minor," except for "arguing with the teacher," which is usually treated with a correcting strategy. They are ordered according to Mrs. Fisher's goal of causing the students to monitor their own behavior. For example, she prefers to monitor and omit taking action unless the student needs a reminder. She then prefers to remind the student to correct his own behavior without singling him out. This is usually done by catching his eye. If that doesn't work or it is impossible to catch the student's eye, she usually calls his name and identifies a task, tells him to stop what he is doing, etc.

The training strategies serve several purposes. They are used to motivate the students, train students to develop and practice self-control skills and to teach the art of independent learning. In other words, they are used to solve discipline problems, learning problems, and work-study problems. They are, therefore, highly efficient as well as effective strategies for Mrs. Fisher.

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Correcting strategies. The correcting strategies also serve a variety of purposes. They are used to determine each student's conduct grade; to determine who receives awards, privileges and punishments; to establish contact between parent and child, as well as the teacher, parent, and child; and to

involve parents in the training and correcting process.

The basic correcting strategy is to have students write their name on the board, called a "sign-in," after they have failed to heed a warning(s). The number of "sign-ins" determines the conduct grade and other consequences such as having to give up one's Good Citizen badge which carries various perks or having to write a "Dear Mother" letter.

The daily conduct grade is posted at breaktime each morning when those who have their names on the board line up to give their grade to Mrs. Fisher. At this time, mini-counseling sessions are held as Mrs. Fisher attempts to motivate and remind students of personal goals that she may have set with them in a previous counseling session.

The correcting strategies are ordered sequentially. With the first sign-in, the student has a "B" in conduct for that day. Second sign-in, the student gets a "C" in conduct for that day. When that sign-in occurs, the student may take a three minute time-out by going over to a designated area; and, while watching the sand run through the time, give himself a "talking-to." The purpose of the time-out is to remove the student from the situation he is in, and give the situation an opportunity to change by the time the student returns.

With the third sign-in, the student gets a "D" in conduct for that day. At this point, the student is required to write a letter to his parent(s). The purpose of this strategy is

"to start a conversation between parent and child," and to provide an opportunity to the parent to give counsel. If the letter is not returned promptly the next day, Mrs. Fisher continues to remind the student, until it appears hopeless that the student will return it. Then she calls the parent.

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Insert Figure 5 about here
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The fourth sign-in results in a daily conduct grade of "F." At this point, it is difficult to predict what will happen next. Sometimes the teacher sends home a formal "letter to the parent," which is known to the students as a "failing slip." Sometimes she has a more formal conference with the student in which he is asked to enumerate his mistakes and state what he should have done. If the student is able to do this, Mrs. Fisher tends to judge his actions to have been intentional. In any case, steps are taken to change the student's conduct. If such repeated off-task behaviors continue, Mrs. Fisher may utilize "off the board" strategies.

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Insert Figure 6 about here
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"Off the board strategies." "Off the board strategies"

are reserved for cases in which the student has ceased taking seriously the correcting strategies, or has a "bad habit," such as "tearfulness" or "failure to complete work." The basic strategy here is to require the student to get eye contact with the teacher before doing anything out of the ordinary. At the same time, the teacher corrects every action that has been targeted. The student may not be always required to sign in, unless the action is particularly disruptive and/or intentional. The end result is that the student's behavior is spotlighted. He may receive numerous warnings during the course of the day; and, therefore, is placed until considerable pressure to improve. If there is a slight change for the better, Mrs. Fisher's strategy is to acknowledge it with a compliment. In this way, the student understands that it is the behavior and not the student himself that the teacher dislikes. According to Mrs. Fisher, she applied off the board strategies to four students with 75% success, during the 1980-81 schbol term. Success is measured by whether or not she was then able to move that student up to the next reading group.

The selection of strategies

To illustrate how Mrs. Fisher selects some management strategies, we will focus on types of off-task behaviors, specifically "very serious" to "mild." Starting with off-task behaviors enables us to show the ranked selections of different

strategies. For example, training strategies are usually selected first, until they do not work; then correcting strategies are selected. Let us assume that Mrs. Fisher is sitting with a group in the reading center when she notices that she has a "group problem." She selects a group alert in an effort to focus attention on the tasks at hand. Her action may be stated as follows.

Strategy 1. If a group problem exists, continue to select a group alert, e.g. continue to alert the group to stop off-task behavior and get on task. (Figure 1 presents a diagrammatic expression of this strategy.)

Let us say the group settles down except for one student, as is often the case. Mrs. Fisher selects a training strategy in order to alert the student. The strategies that could represent that action are expressed in Strategies 2 through 7.

Strategy 2. If the student is off task and has received at least one warning or none at all, select a training strategy, e.g. warn the student and give him an opportunity to correct himself.

Strategy 3. If the student has had at least one or two warnings, and is acting sneaky, select a correcting strategy.

Strategy 4. If the student has had at least one or two warnings, is a boisterous personality and is being loud, select a correcting strategy.

Strategy 5. If the student has had at least one or two

warnings, has a shy personality and is being loud for a change, select a training strategy, which may be to omit taking any action.

Strategy 6. If the student has had at least one or two warnings, is off task but is not being sneaky or loud, and is average or above average, select a correcting strategy.

Strategy 7. If the student has had at least one or two warnings, is off task but is not being sneaky or loud (disruptive), and is below average, continue to select training strategies, until the student makes no effort to change his behavior. In that case, select a correcting strategy.

The next three strategies refer to tattling which is uniquely managed.

Strategy 8. If the student tattles out of distress, such as complaining about another student, give a brief, mild admonition, unless the student is reporting stealing, cheating, fighting, or illness. In this case, look into it further, but do not take one student's word against another.

Strategy 9. If the student tattles to hurt another student, or to manipulate the teacher, give a curt admonition, glare with the eyes, and perhaps use a hand motion to make the student go away.

Strategy 10. If the student answers back after selecting Strategy 9, raise tone of voice and increase curtness. Select correcting strategy if student persists.

The next strategy deals with the "off the board" student.

Strategy 11. If the student is off the board, warn all targeted behaviors. Have the student sign in for more intentionally disruptive behaviors.

The sequence of operations performed by Mrs. Fisher in selecting among Strategy 2 through 11 is diagrammed in Figure 7. The construct as it is shown became the instrument by which Mrs. Fisher's classroom performance and interactive decisions were tested and categorized.[3]

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Insert Figure 7 about here

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Testing the selection of management strategies

During the three days of testing, seventy-four selections of strategies were observed, involving four reading periods, morning and afternoon. Sixty-six of those strategies were expected and observed, producing a predictive accuracy rate of 89%. Of the eight predictive errors, five were related to a boisterous student, Jimmy, functioning below average. He was being loud but was warned instead of corrected as called for by Strategy 4. One of the five instances involved another boy who was assigned with Jimmy to the lowest reading group. During a follow-up interview, to clarify the teacher's reasons for acting, Mrs. Fisher explained that she believed the two boys

"were not acting with the intention of disrupting class." "They can't be expected to keep busy all the time." Her statement implies that it is early in the school year; the two students have a "learning problem," and she is still training them in how to go to school.

Another predictive error involved a student, Tyrone, who was described by Mrs. Fisher as "aggressive" and "above average." Tyrone was being loud but he also was given an extra warning instead of a correction.

Finally, two predictive errors involved a student, LeRoy, who had been identified as a "discipline problem with poor self-control." LeRoy also received extra warnings instead of corrections, but a later interview with Mrs. Fisher revealed that he was "off the board." The two predictive errors were then counted as expected selections of Strategy 11.

In the final analysis, there were six selections of strategies that were expected but not observed, producing a predictive error rate of 8%. At the same time, there were sixty-eight selections of strategies that were both observed and expected, producing a final predictive accuracy rate of 92%.

Interestingly enough, from the perspective of Strategy 4, of the seven expected selections, there were only two which were observed, producing a predictive accuracy rate of 28.5% for that one strategy, which is a correcting strategy.

There were thirty-eight observed selections of Strategy 2,

which reflect the teacher's use of training strategies, and only four observed selections of correcting strategies, drawn on Strategies 4 and 11. There was one observed selection of Strategy 6 and six observed selections of Strategy 7, which illustrates that Mrs. Fisher makes use of the criterion levels of required supervision.

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Discussion

All the predictive errors resulted from Mrs. Fisher selecting a training strategy instead of a correcting strategy. She was more likely to give additional warnings to a student. She was, in effect, emphasizing training. This is in keeping with the findings of Emmer, Evertson, and Anderson (1980) which indicate that the effective classroom manager spends more time in the fall instructing students in classroom rules and procedures, thus clarifying her expectations for appropriate student behaviors.

Of the three students involved in the six predictive errors, two were in the lowest reading group, Group III. Students in Group III, who are usually below average, require many repetitions before they acquire a competency, whether it be academic or social. Mrs. Fisher believes that such students "already

have enough on them," and she does not want them to get discouraged and stop trying to learn to read. She is, therefore, more likely to warn than correct students in Group III. Brophy and Rohrkemper (1981) and MacKay and Marlin (1978) report similar teacher behaviors in ther studies. Accordingly, teachers tend to make compensation for students who try but cannot learn, students who are shy and introverted, and students who are deprived in some way.

Most importantly, the study discovered that a teacher has a plan for managing students which is identifiable and predictable, though there is some variation due to time of year. Indeed, Mrs. Fisher's plan reflects a complex interaction between her goals, strategies that are hierarchically arranged, and selection criteria she considers relevant to the problem at hand. It has been theorized that the fast moving give-and-take of teacher-student interaction does not allow for the amount of time needed to make a selection based on "purposeful thinking" (Shavelson & Stern, 1981; Yinger, 1980). According to Yinger (1980), "The swift pace and immediacy of the teacher's interaction with pupils often precludes the rational purposeful thinking that is normally associated with problem solving and decision making." The results of this study suggest that a teacher has time to process information in order to make selections among established routines. Indeed, if she has a routine plan of

action in mind, selections of management strategies may be made during interactive teaching with specific academic and social objectives in mind for the student.

The quantification technique for testing the data proved useful in showing that what the investigator had observed and recorded represents one portion of the teacher's cognitive organization, e.g. the plan used by Mrs. Fisher to make decisions about students who are off task at their desks while she is instructing another group. At this point, the strategies appear to be descriptively adequate in delineating a relationship between teacher thought and performance.

Educational importance of the study

A teacher's management plan appears simple enough to determine on the surface. However, when it becomes clear that the elements of the plan are derived from a teacher's concepts which she has developed over years of teaching and expresses in a routine manner, the picture is not so simple to draw. The plan represents a complex interaction between a teacher's goals for her students, the criteria she considers important, and the management strategies which she has found to work for her.

It is clear that if educators are to fully understand the complex relationship between teacher thought and performance, systematic interviewing and observation of cooperative teachers who are willing to introspect and share the results of their

introspection are required. Such research will increase understanding of teachers' classroom knowledge, contribute to the development of normed problem-solving strategies, and improve the process of initiating new teachers into the complexities of teaching.

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Footnotes

[1]Plan, used here to refer to the mental relationship between criteria and strategies selected, is similar to Miller, Galanter, and Pribram's plan (1960). They hypothesize a plan to be a mental hierarchy of instructions which control the order in which a sequence of operations is to be performed as a general effort to achieve a goal.

[2]Kounin (1970) showed a positive correlation between freedom from deviancy in the primary grades and student involvement in seatwork activities and seatwork variety and challenge. Further research indicates that more effective management is maintained in student-paced activities if they are tightly programmed (Anderson, Evertson, & Brophy, 1979).

[3]Geoghegan (1973) provides an in-depth explanation of how plans or natural information processing rules can be accurately diagrammed. According to Geoghegan, "The plan specifies which situational items are potentially relevant to making a choice between alternative outputs, defines an order for sequentially considering those items, and indicates the appropriate output when sufficient input information has been obtained."

Figure 1. Mrs. Fisher's macro-plan for selecting management strategies when a group or a student is off-task.

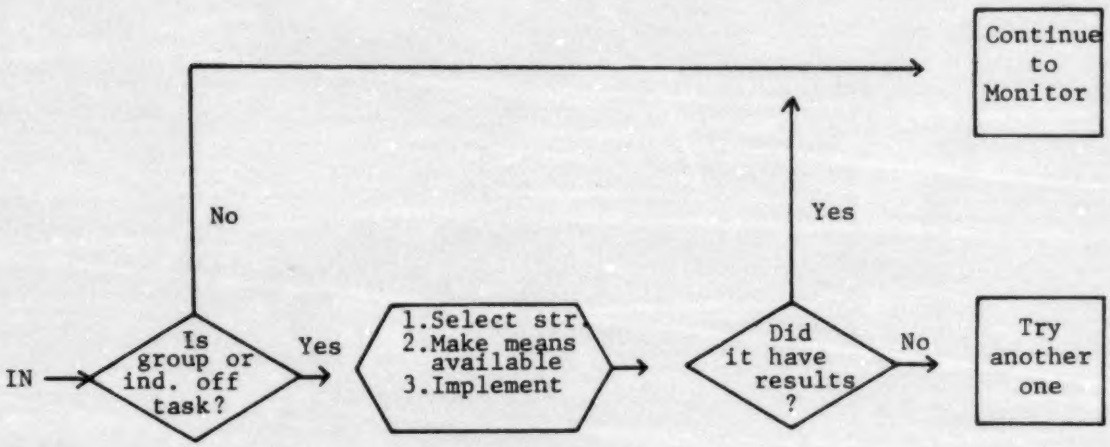

Figure 2. Some types of off-task behaviors which Mrs. Fisher orders according to disruptiveness and the intentions of the student to disrupt.

"Not tolerated ever"

1. Steals major item, such as $5.00.
2. Physically hurts someone intentionally as in a fight.
3. Destroys property intentionally.
4. Uses bad or foul language intentionally.

"Very serious"

5. Argues with the teacher. "I wasn't talking!"
6. Fusses loudly with another student. "That's my pencil."
7. Boisterous behavior, such as jumping out of the desk and blurting out.
8. Tattles "to run the teacher." Student attempts to manipulate the teacher by saying, "Teacher, there are too many children over there."
9. Tattles in an attempt to hurt someone.
10. Fails to respond to a group directive. "Will everyone please get out your workbook."
11. Steals minor item, such as a pencil.

"Serious to minor"

12. Goes into an out-of-bounds situation, such as a reading group watching a filmstrip.
13. Gets noisy in a tutoring group.
14. Sneaky behavior, such as hiding behind a bookcase.
15. Talking non-school talk, but not very loud.
16. Wandering around the room haphazardly.
17. Off task at desk but not disrupting, such as daydreaming.

Figure 3. Mrs. Fisher's criteria for making management strategy selections.

1. Personality characteristics. Students with boisterous personalities are more likely to be corrected when their behavior becomes loud. Shy students need encouragement in expressing themselves and may not be corrected as quickly.

2. Types of off-task behaviors. The relative seriousness of the off-task behavior is determined by the level of disruptiveness and if the student's intentions are to disrupt.

3. Level of required supervision. Students usually range from above average to below average in the amount of supervision and instruction needed in developing self-control skills and work-study skills. Below average students are given more training and more time to learn the rules while average and above average students are corrected more quickly.

4. Repeated vs. isolated behaviors. Repeated off-task behaviors are considered to be more intentional than isolated behaviors and are, therefore, more serious.

5. Improving vs. not improving. A student who has been improving in behavior and slips momentarily may not be corrected or even warned. On the other hand, if a student is not improving and even regressing, punishment may be increased.

Figure 4. Mrs. Fisher's training strategies ordered according to her goal of causing students to monitor their own behavior.

1. Monitor
2. Omit taking action
3. Cause student to correct own behavior without singling out.
   A. Catch eye of the student, or
   B. Make a movement to catch the student's attention, such as waving the hand, shaking the head, moving toward, etc., or
   C. Give a group alert.
4. Cause student to correct behavior by singling out:
   A. Call name, then
   B. Identify tasks, or
   C. Tell to stop, or
   D. Redirect, or
   E. Counsel.

Figure 5. Mrs. Fisher's selection of strategies for retrieving a parent letter.

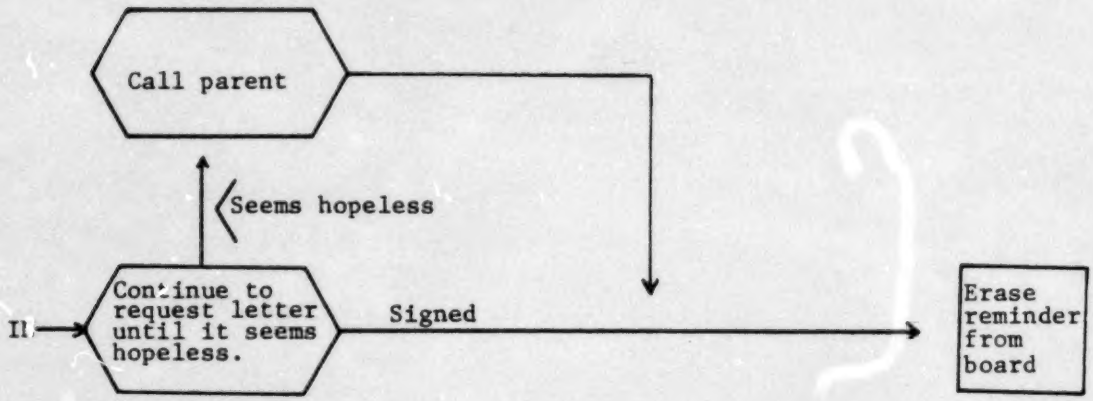

Figure 6. Mrs. Fisher's plan for selecting correcting strategies

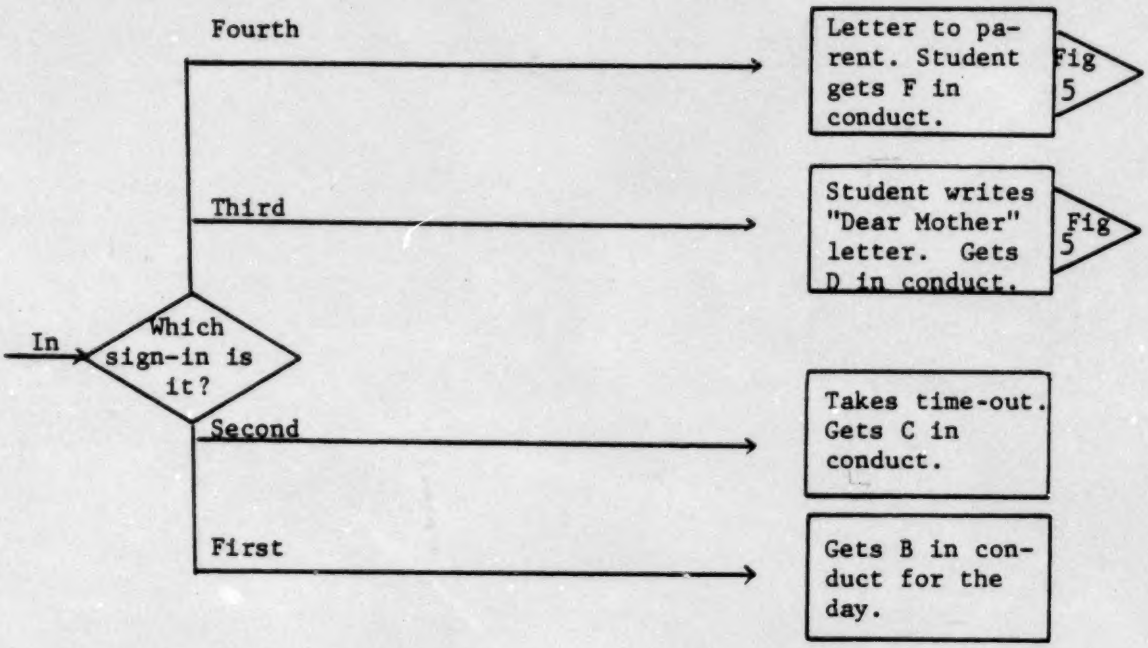

Figure 7. Diagram of strategies selected for off-task behaviors which frequently occur during reading seatwork.

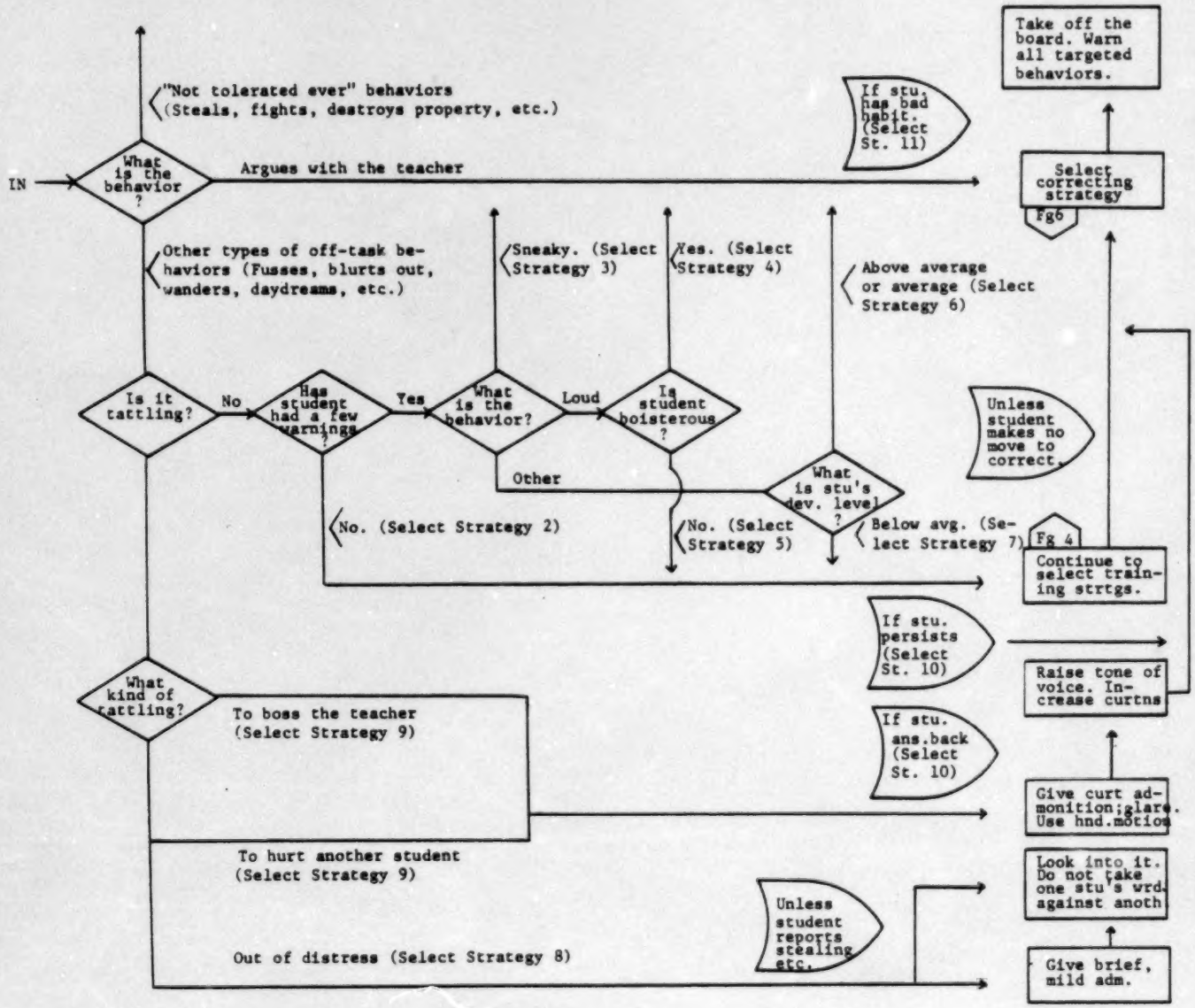
IN
What is the behavior?
"Not tolerated ever" behaviors (Steals, fights, destroys property, etc.)
Argues with the teacher
Other types of off-task behaviors (Fusses, blurts out, wanders, daydreams, etc.)
If stu. has bad habit. (Select St. 11)
Take off the board. Warn all targeted behaviors.
Select correcting strategy
Fg6
Sneaky. (Select Strategy 3)
Yes. (Select Strategy 4)
Above average or average (Select Strategy 6)
Is it tattling?
No
Has student had a few warnings?
Yes
What is the behavior?
Loud
Is student boisterous?
Other
What is stu's dev. level?
Unless student makes no move to correct.
No. (Select Strategy 2)
No. (Select Strategy 5)
Below avg. (Select Strategy 7)
Fg 4
Continue to select training strtgs.
If stu. persists (Select St. 10)
Raise tone of voice. Increase curtns
What kind of tattling?
To boss the teacher (Select Strategy 9)
If stu. ans.back (Select St. 10)
Give curt admonition;glare. Use hnd.motion
To hurt another student (Select Strategy 9)
Look into it. Do not take one stu's wrd. against anoth
Unless student reports stealing etc.
Out of distress (Select Strategy 8)
Give brief, mild adm.

Table 1. Expected vs. observed selections of management strategies during four reading periods.

Expected selections of strategies		#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10	#11		Total # Expected	Rate of Predctn.
Group alert	#1	7												7	100%
One or two warnings	#2		32											32	100%
Sneaky behavior	#3			0										0	
Boisterous & loud	#4		5		2									7	28.5%
Shy and loud	#5					0								0	
Avg. or above avg. and off task	#6		1				1							2	50%
Below avg. and off task	#7							6						6	100%
Distress tattle	#8								3					3	100%
Tattle to hurt or boss	#9									0				0	
Persists in the tattle	#10										0			0	
Off the board	#11											17		17	100%
Total # strategies observed		7	38	0	2	0	1	6	3	0	0	17	=	74	

Final prediction rate = 92%